

Hammond Library
44 North Ashland Avenue
Chicago
Cook County
Illinois

HABS No. ILL-1017

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Building Survey
National Park Service
Washington Planning and Service Center
1730 North Lynn Street
Arlington, Virginia

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. ILL-1017

HAMMOND LIBRARY

Location: 44 North Ashland Avenue, Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.

Present Owner: The First Congregational Church, 1613 West Washington Street, Chicago, Illinois.

Present Use: The building is being demolished at the time of this report.

Statement of Significance: The building is an early work of the firm of Adler and Sullivan and represents an early phase in the development of Louis Sullivan.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners (chain of title:)

Legal description of the property: Sublots 6, 7, and 8 of Lot 1 and the East 30 feet of Lot 2 in Block 64 of Page and Wood's Subdivision of Blocks 50, 63, and 64, Canal Trustees Subdivision of Section 7-39-14.

The following is an abstract of the chain of title contained in Book 446C in the Cook County Recorder's Office: The library was built in the middle of the block, immediately to the south of the First Congregational Church. The Union Park Congregational Society (now First Congregational) received land (lots 1-4) from Levi D. Boone on August 1, 1876 (Document 96669). Lots 5 and 6 are first mentioned on May 25, 1917 when Mary St. Dole received them from the Directors of the Chicago Theological Seminary (Document 6119791). The last entry on February 17, 1959 names the First Congregational Church as receiving the deed for the south 447 feet of lot 6, and all of lots 7, 8, 9, and 10 from The First National Bank of Chicago (Document 16823220).

2. Date of Erection: 1882.

3. Architect: Adler and Sullivan.

4. Builder, suppliers, etc.: Unknown; cost about \$15,000 (Morrison, 1935, p. 296).

5. Original plans, additions and alterations: The building was originally intended to be the Library for Union Theological College. The College later moved to the campus of the University of Chicago to become the Chicago Theological Seminary. The building has been deserted for many years, causing the interior to fall into complete ruin. To the north is the beautifully maintained First Congregational Church. To the south is a weedfilled vacant lot.

B. Bibliography:

Condit, Carl W., The Rise of the Skyscraper. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1952. p. 49n.

Morrison, Hugh, Louis Sullivan. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1935. p. 296.

C. Likely Sources not yet investigated:

History of First Congregational Church and Union Theological College.

Prepared by Osmund R. Overby, Supervisory Architect
and
Larry J. Homolka, Historian
August 1963

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. This is a medium sized brick building, typical of the early works of Louis Sullivan. In its ornament it shows the influence of the Philadelphia architect Frank Furness for whom Sullivan had worked.
2. Condition of fabric: The building is structurally sound, but the interiors have been stripped and windows removed. It has been occupied by pigeons for many years and is filthy. It is scheduled to be demolished in August and September, 1963.

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Number of stories: Elevated basement, main floor, very high upper floor for reading room with two levels of balconies.
2. Over-all dimensions: 49' wide east front by about 60' deep.
3. Layout-shape: Rectangular.
4. Foundations: Stone, random, uncoursed below grade; smooth-faced regular ashlar on the front at the basement level.
5. Wall construction: Rough brick sides and rear. Smooth faced brick on front with stone trim, and with terra cotta panels over windows and in peak of gable. Wide belt course between upper two floors.
6. Chimneys: Brick chimney in north wall, enlarged at later date.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Simple wood entrance door at side walk level leads to vestibule and short flight of stairs to main level.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Front divided into three bays with paired windows in each. Stone trim around windows, square stone piers with carved capital between the two windows of each pair.
8. Roof:-
 - a. Shape: Gable, with gable end turned toward the front.
 - b. Towers, cupolas: Corner pilasters continue above the roof as short towers, with flat roofed, open work caps suggesting that the towers may have served either as chimneys or dove cotes. A long cupola or monitor extends down the center of the roof for the sky light of the upper floor.

C. Technical Description of Interior:

1. The main floor is divided in half by a north-south hallway, with three rooms of about equal size on each side. The center room on the east side is used for the entrance vestibule and the flight of stairs leading from the sidewalk level up to the main floor level. The stairway to the upper level and the basement is in the south-west corner. Some of the other partitions, which about columns with decorated capitals, may be later additions. There is a single high room on the upper floor, skylighted, originally used as a reading room.
2. Stairways: Simple enclosed wood stairways.
3. Flooring: Hardwood strip flooring.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster.
5. Doorways and doors: Sliding double doors on first floor.
6. Trim: The upper floor has exposed roof trusses, made of iron and partly encased in fire proofing tile; the vertical members are treated as columns with characteristic early Sullivan detail in capitals and bases. The trusses are supported visually on large plaster brackets. The upper floor originally had two stories of surrounding balconies for book storage. These were removed before the date of this report. Interior columns on the first floor have freely foliated capitals. First floor windows have wide roll-down shutters or blinds on the inside that are made of large wood slats similar to roll top desk.

D. Site:

The building is situated at the sidewalk line at the front, on a level lot, and faces east. The chapel and church of the First Congregational Church adjoin closely on the north. There is a vacant lot to the south.

Prepared by Osmond Overby, Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
July, 1963